

Message Text

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67

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 CIEP-01

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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2571

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL IZMIR

USDOCOSOUTH NAPTLES

DUCOALSE/6 ATAF IZMIR

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PLOS, TU, GR

SUBJECT: TURKISH OFFICIALS COMMENT ON THE AEGEAN

1. MINENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES SELAHATTIN KILIC
ANNOUNCED FEBRUARY 24 THAT GOT WOULD BEGIN SEISMIC SURVEYS
IN THE AEGEAN IN MAY. ACCORDING TO KILIC, THE TURKISH
VESSEL HORA (WHICH MAY BE A SALVAGE VESSEL OWNED BY
DENIZCILIK BANKASI) HAS BEEN OUTFITTED FOR SEISMIC
RESEARCH. KILIC STATED THAT "TURKEY CANNOT PROSPECT FOR
OIL IN THE SEA WITH A NORWEGIAN OR ANY OTHER FOREIGN
VESSEL." HE SAID THAT FOLLOWING THE SEISMIC SURVEYS,
TEST BORING WOULD COME LATER "NEAR THE ISLAND OF THASSOS
AND IN THE MARMARA." SEPARATELY, FEBRUARY 25 AYRINTILI
HABER REPORTED THAT THE TURKISH MINERAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
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(MTA) HAS COMPLETED THE OUTFITTING OF A PETROLEUM RESEARCH

VESSEL AT THE COST OF TL 16.5 MILLION (TL 15 - US 1.00).
(WE SUSPECT THAT THE VESSEL MAY BE THE HORA.)

2. FONMIN CAGLAYANGIL COMMENTED ON THE CONTINENTAL SHELF DISPUTE DURING THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BUDGET DEBATES FEB. 23. HE SAID THAT THE GOT HAD EXPLAINED TO THE GOG THAT "ACCORDING TO THEIR (THE GREEKS) INTERPRETATION OF A CONTINENTAL SHELF, A TURK GOING INTO THE SEA AT KAS (ANTALYA PROVINCE) WOULD NEED A PASSPORT IF HE WENT OUT 460 METERS, BECAUSE HE WOULD THEN BE IN THE WATERS OF MEIS (CASTELLORIZZO) ISLAND. THIS WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE" CAGLAYANGIL NOTED THAT THE GREEKS HAD AGREED AT BERN TO CONSIDER THE TURKISH POSITION. HE SAID THAT TALKS WOULD CONTINUE AND "THE FACT THAT IT (BERN) WAS A MEETING WITH NO PRE-CONDITIONS WAS POSITIVE STEP."

3. THE FEBRUARY 25-26 TURKISH AIR AND NAVAL MANEUVERS IN THE AEGEAN RECEIVED MINOR, FACTUAL NEWSPAPER COVERAGE FEBRUARY 25.

4. COMMENT: (A) TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, TURKEY DOES NOT HAVE A VESSEL CAPABLE OF CORE DRILLING. THE LARGE INVESTMENT AND THE TIME REQUIRED TO CONSTRUCT SUCH A VESSEL SUGGEST THAT THE ENTRY INTO SERVICE OF A DOMESTICALLY CONSTRUCTED DRILLING VESSEL WOULD BE SOME YEARS AWAY.

(B) KILIC'S STATEMENT THAT "PROSPECTING" WOULD BE CONDUCTED AROUND THASSOS COULD WELL DRAW PUBLIC RESPONSE FROM GREECE. APPARENTLY KILIC WAS REFERRING TO INTERNATIONAL WATERS OFF THASSOS.
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